

## **REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

### **I. General Remarks and Disposition of the Claims.**

The application has been reviewed in light of the Final Office Action mailed October 4, 2006 (the "Final Office Action"). At the time of the Final Office Action, claims 1-34 were pending in this application. Claims 1, 2, 17, and 18 stand rejected in view of prior art. Claims 3-16 and 19-34 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. For the reasons discussed below, Applicants believe that all of the remaining claims are patentable over the cited prior art, and therefore respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejections.

### **II. Remarks Regarding Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)**

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 4,049,057 issued to Hewes (hereinafter "*Hewes*"). Applicants have cancelled claim 1.

### **III. Remarks Regarding Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)**

Claims 2, 17, and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Hewes* in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,292,708 issued to Mundt or U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0164236 issued to Thornton. Applicants have cancelled claims 2 and 18. Applicants have amended claim 17 so that it is dependent upon the currently amended claim 3, which is addressed below.

#### **IV. Remarks Regarding Allowable Subject Matter**

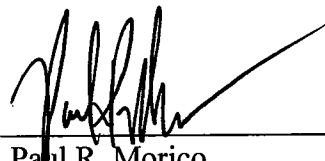
The Examiner has objected to claims 3-16 and 19-34 although he stated that these claims “would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.” (Final Office Action at 3.) Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner’s indication that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Applicants have rewritten claims 3 and 19 in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and the intervening claims.

**SUMMARY**

In light of the above remarks and amendments, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding objections and rejections. Applicants further submit that the application is now in condition for allowance, and earnestly solicit timely notice of the same. Should the Examiner have any questions, comments or suggestions in furtherance of the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the attorney of record by telephone, facsimile, or electronic mail.

Applicants believe that no fees are due in association with the filing of this response. However, should the Commissioner deem that any additional fees are due, including any fees for extensions of time, Applicants respectfully request that the Commissioner accept this as a Petition Therefor, and direct that any additional fees be debited from Baker Botts L.L.P., Deposit Account No. 02-0383, Order Number 063718.0427 for any underpayment of fees that may be due in association with this filing.

Respectfully submitted,



---

Paul R. Morico  
Registration No. 35,960  
One Shell Plaza  
910 Louisiana Street  
Houston, Texas 77002-4995  
Telephone: 713.229.1732  
Facsimile: 713.229.7732  
email: paul.morico@bakerbotts.com

Date: November 30, 2006